

FIRECRIER

West Des Moines Fire Department February, 2013

UPCOMING DATES

◆ **March 30th, 2013 EASTER EGG HUNT
– DMACC West Campus**

ON THE SPOTS

Lt. John Gallagher	Lt. Todd Albrecht
Mike Feekes	PJ Harrison
Greg Siembieda	Bill McKibben
BJ Schumacher	
Corry Dolbeer	

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Eric Kozak, Jim Kirkman and Tyrone Belle achieved their Iowa Aerial Driver/Operator certification with the State of Iowa. Will Jess completed Cross Fit Judges Course. Travis Hansen- Emergency Medical Technician

**EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE- The WDM
FD certainly exemplifies that.....**



**WDM City Employee of the YEAR-
Will "Power"**

At the annual employee recognition dinner Will gave a very passionate speech (imagine that). As I congratulated him and recognized the monetary value that came with the award, he said "now I have some money to buy additional equipment for the station". No wonder he was recognized by his peers. The only statement, I am still contemplating, during his speech, was that he expected to be a "mediocre fire fighter" ????? BUT a dedicated wellness representative.

Not only did Will receive the 2012 Employee of the Year Award, I did some research on what you have all accomplished over the years in this arena of achievement and recognition. In 2012, over 70 On The Spots were issued to the fire department (Wow). Since 2003, the FD has achieved a City Quarterly Award EVERY YEAR except 2006 (Wow-Wow). Since 2006 the FD had a member achieve the Employee of the Year:

Mike Whitsell – 2003
Yance Woody – 2010
Will Jess - 2012

A PASSING ERA

It is often the department head that comes on board and changes the image or patch of the organization. Not this time---- Over 85% of the department voted to switch our patch and decal to a new look. We appreciate those that worked on the original patch and stood as our symbol for many years. We wish to thank Deputy Chief Greg Jones and his project team on sorting through dozens of possibilities. The new patch provides a clean and crisp look and identifies Iowa as our home state when patches go elsewhere. Within the center area you will notice the "traditional" which is a newer version of one of the original WDM symbols seen on some vehicle doors today.



previous

You will also notice, in the center, what looks like a watermark behind the WDM a maltese cross.

Potential Decal for Vehicles or maybe shirt embroidery.....



MOVING ON

Nick Valdez- 4 years- Station #17 has resigned to pursue a higher education degree at Drake University- we wish Nick the best of luck.

ABOVE THE CALL OF DUTY

E220 "B" was recently cited by Police Sargent Bill Jess for assisting the PD with a patient that was physically abusive with public safety officers at a medical emergency. Lt. Albrecht, D/O Harrison and Fire Medic McKibben needed to assist in restraining the patient, after he struck a police officer. All three were issued an On The Spot awards for their valuable assistance that prevented others from being harmed.

The NEW E220 is being constructed



READY FOR ITS FIRST TEST RUN



NEEDS A LITTLE HELP GETTING STARTED



BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD



No Longer “Qualified” to Drive---and Proud of It.



WHAT’S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?



Causes or Contributors to the Four Critical Errors that Cause All Accidents:

- Rushing
- Frustration
- Fatigue
- Complacency “Just Another False Alarm” or “I Know What I’m Doing”)

WHO DO I BOTHER ???

The answer up front is “that we still need you to”!! But, I am sure that question is posed (to yourself) about 700 times per year, every time we get dispatched to an “alarm”. 29% of all our dispatches, in 2012, were alarms (not assignments). With that high of a call volume and 99.9% of those calls end up being false, it is easy to get frustrated. It is 3 a.m. in the morning and 10 degrees below zero....who wants to get up to that when the stats indicate it will be “nothing” or you are in the middle of intense training when the call comes in or it is getting frustrating responding to the station to just get cancelled. I am totally aware of your potential frustration and I have been evaluating the consequences for a long time. The reason we must still respond is that we often receive multiple calls at the same time, requiring POC responses or there is that slim chance that it is an assignment but no one has reported that yet. We probably have one of the highest % in the Country because of all the alarms systems we require to be monitored in all the sprinklered buildings. It is a GREAT asset to have so many monitored and sprinklered buildings but the downside is all the false alarms we receive. We have stringent fines for multiple false alarms but the majority of the occupancies do not experience more than 3 per year. We have initiated licenses for the contractors to be qualified professionals for installs. A few years back we quit sending all the fire apparatus in an emergent mode. There were some cells among us that thought (very vocally)that was really a

risky idea but the stats have proved them wrong time and time again. So what do we do to reduce these risky and costly calls? I have ideas but they would not be popular and could raise the risk slightly but they are based on clear statistical data. Bottom line for now--- we need everyone to take "Alarms" seriously or start thinking, as a team, a logical approach to reducing such a high call volume with all the resources sent to them. We also review stats very closely each month and we know who we can rely on for response to alarms or the crews that don't drag their feet on turnout times for alarms. We are counting on you!

PARAMEDIC TRAINING

Another milestone

I am thrilled to let everyone know that for the first time that I can find in West Des Moines Fire Department history we will be sending someone to Paramedic School. This may not seem like a historic event to some although if you have been around as long as me or longer you can understand the milestone. We have selected Josh Schut from Station 18 "C" shift from interested people to attend. We are currently working out the details and fine print with Local 3586 so Josh can attend class late this summer. We hope to support and further our ALS Engine program with sending Josh to approximately one year of class to become a paramedic.

Please feel free to grab me if you have questions and I would be happy to fill you in.
Matt Sonnenburg

WESTERN VILLAGE SMOKE DETECTOR BATTERY INSTALLS

Thanks to the efforts of Fire Marshal Whitsell; and the POC F/FS on E170 over fifty (50) manufactured housing units in Western Village had new batteries installed in their smoke detectors. Made available, through a grant from the Energizer Corporation the residents are safer and able to be alerted, in the event of a fire. The F/FS delivered and installed the batteries the night of the snow storm on 02/21/13. We also found six (6) with NO detectors that we will be installing detectors for them.

Severe Weather Awareness Week

March 25-29th, 2013 is the national Severe Weather Awareness Week. The week is designed to keep our citizens informed of the latest weather warning technology and how to prepare for severe summer weather events. On Wednesday, March 27th, 2013 at approximately 10:15 a.m., severe weather sirens will be activated nationwide. The City of West Des Moines also activates the sirens the first Saturday of every month at noon. Remember, the sirens are designed to alert citizens that are outside and are not designed to awaken you or cover areas inside a building. We highly recommend the purchase of a weather alert radio for such notification. Also, the Polk County policy includes the sirens be activated if winds speeds are predicted to be greater than 70 mph. There are no "clear" activation signals. The sirens will activate during tornado WARNINGS or if winds are greater than the 70 mph.

WINTER FIRE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

We may have set a record for the number of WDM FD members attending in Ames at Winter Fire School. The following personnel attended:

Chief Cox	D.C. Eslick
Lt. Westhoff	Fire Marshal Whitsell
Lt. Finken	Lt. Post
Lt. Hufford	Matt Lehman
Yance Woody	Neil Weglarz
Jim Kirkman	Eric Brennehan
Aaron Gilbert	Nermina Music
Michael Dunkin	